



"We are all choice architects, for ourselves and for others." At least that is what the author of this month's book would say. Over the next few weeks, focus on your choices and where they are derived from. Put some serious thought into how you are showing up for meetings. Pay attention to how you are making big decisions, like staying in your current job or closing that book to retire early. After all, the choices we make directly impact our team.

Kristin

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#### BATTLING THE GREAT RESIGNATION WITH BELONGING

The Great Resignation is quite real. A new survey commissioned by Dr. Rumeet Billan, an expert on psychological capital, reveals that nearly half of American workers are considering leaving their current place of employment.

Those who are considering making a switch are less likely to feel a sense of belonging in their current workplace, which is most often associated with being treated fairly and respectfully – though belonging encompasses many more emotions.

The 2022 Workplace Belonging Survey, finds that nearly all employed Americans (88%) agree that a sense of belonging at work boosts productivity. It also explores the gaps in what workers believe would lead to a sense of belonging and what they are currently experiencing at their jobs.

"We have recently undergone life-altering challenges as a population, exposing the need for workplace cultures to be transformed," said Dr. Billan. "More than 19 million American workers have quit their jobs since April 2021, disrupting businesses everywhere. Companies cannot afford to continue going through this type of employee turnover. It is important that we take the time to learn why this is happening and our recent findings suggest that workers place a high value on the very human and relational aspects of work."

Employed Americans agree that belonging leads to higher productivity at work. If workers feel like they belong, companies can reap substantial benefits – lower turnover, healthier corporate culture, a more productive workforce, engaged employees, and more.

Nearly all (88%) strongly or somewhat agree that a sense of belonging leads to higher productivity at work, including a majority (54%) that strongly agree. Three-quarters (76%) say having a sense of belonging at work means being treated fairly and respectfully.

Two in three say a sense of belonging at work means having their perspective and/or contributions valued by their colleagues and superiors (64%) and working in an environment where they feel accepted (64%).

The largest disparity between what workers think belonging means and what they currently feel at work is “being treated fairly and respectfully at work” (17 percentage point difference), followed by “having their perspective and/or contributions valued by their colleagues and superiors” and “feeling connected with others at work” (15 percentage point difference for both).

Employees cite fairness and respect as the top driver of belonging in the workplace, presenting the greatest opportunity for businesses and employers to create belonging in their organizations.

“Belonging is not a program or initiative, it is an experience related to social connectedness, feeling included, and being accepted,” said Dr. Billan. “It’s not just about inviting everyone to the proverbial table. What happens when they get there? Now, more than ever, companies and employers must take a more human-centered approach to how they support, communicate, and engage with their employees. Well-intentioned quick fixes can come across as transactional or virtue signaling when this is not complemented with the effort to strengthen relational ties.”

Only 36% of employed Americans feel they work in an inclusive environment. Less than half of employed Americans feel connected with others at work (45%). Less than half of American workers (40%) feel aligned with their organization’s mission, vision, and values. This is also true for Millennials, who represent 35% of the total U.S. labor force and are currently the largest working generation. Just over one in three (35%) feel aligned with their organization’s mission, vision, and values.

Belonging is a fundamental human motivation, and we are hardwired towards it. Employees are experiencing stress and burnout. They are seeking a renewed sense of purpose in their work and want connection with their colleagues and superiors. Failing to recognize and invest in creating experiences of belonging and failing to meet the demands of a changing workforce will continue to push workers out instead of pulling them in.

# The 2022 Workplace Belonging Survey

Employed job seekers are more likely to feel lonely and excluded in their current role.

Belonging is good for business.

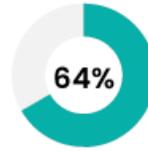


Agree a sense of belonging at work boosts productivity.

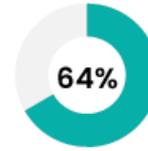
What does having a sense of belonging mean to Americans workers?



Being treated fairly and respectfully.



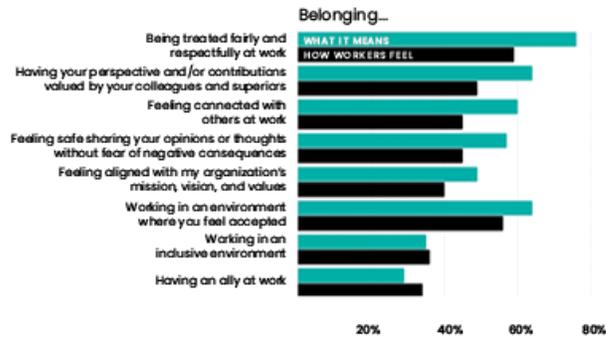
Having their perspective and/or contributions valued by their colleagues and superiors.



Working in an environment where they feel accepted.

There's a GAP

The largest disparity between what workers think belonging means and what they currently feel at work is "being treated fairly and respectfully at work."



Employees are leaving.

Nearly half of American workers are considering leaving their current place of employment.



There's more to the story...



One in four women feel lonely at work.



One in three millennials feel aligned with the organization's mission, vision, and values.

## Opportunities to drive belonging

"Belonging is not a program or initiative, it is an experience related to social connectedness, feeling included, and being accepted. Now, more than ever, companies and employers must take a more human-centered approach to how they support, communicate, and engage with their employees. Well-intentioned quick fixes can come across as transactional or virtue signaling when this is not complemented with the effort to strengthen relational ties." – Dr. Rumeet Billan



Dr. Rumeet Billan  
[www.rumeetbillan.com](http://www.rumeetbillan.com)

Source: Workplace Belonging Survey, Ipsos/Dr. Rumeet Billan

A HUGE thank you and shout out to my good friend and colleague Dr. Rumeet Billan for commissioning this survey and sharing it with me – so I could share it with you!

## MAKING THE BEST PANEL MODERATOR DECISIONS

A new panel moderator recently contacted me with all kinds of questions about her upcoming panel:

- What's best? Should I sit stage right and have all the panelists sit to the left of me in a row? Or, should I sit in the middle ala Bill Maher and arrange chairs in a U-shape? Or a large round table ala The View?
- What about chairs? What's best? Have panelists sit on tall bar-room stools? Large comfy fabric chairs? A sofa?
- Should I ask each person a different question? Or, have each of them answer the same question?
- Best way to get questions from the audience? A mic in the middle of the room people can walk up to and ask? Or, a 'runner' with a mic finding each person and handing them the mic?
- What other things I should consider?

Notice, she wanted to know "What's best?" And while I personally have some preferences, there is no ONE way to moderate a panel discussion. It all depends on the topic, the venue, the panelists, and of course, the moderator's own personal style.

My best advice is to make ALL of these small choices (aka the other things she should consider) on behalf of the audience to deliver the "promise" as stated in the program materials. BTW – you can find out all the things you should consider in my book, [Powerful Panels](#).

## FROM THE BOOKSHELF: ELEMENTS OF CHOICE

Every day, we pose choices to our friends, colleagues, and families. The way that decision is presented can influence the decision – for good or bad.

Eric Johnson, in his book, *The Elements of Choice*, shares some amazing insights about "choice architecture" – the design of how to present and influence (intentionally or not) what you will choose.

Yes, it is a bit creepy and scary, but engrossing to read as we are subject to good and bad choice architecture all the time...and we don't even know it! And, we are consciously or unconsciously subjecting others with our biases in the way that we are shaping their choices! The book is easy to follow (although Johnson rambles and repeats himself a bit), talking about:

- **Plausible Paths.** These are the paths you take on autopilot, made quickly and without a lot of reasoning (however, they end up shaping the rest of your journey!). Some of these "assembled preferences" are quite predictable!
- **Decisions by Default.** This is what happens when people don't make a decision (which, after all, IS a decision!).
- **How Many Options?** It isn't about how many options you have, but how to present the options more fluently and facilitating a more accurate choice.
- **Putting Things in Order.** Yes, indeed, the order of options on a list can influence our decisions.
- **Describing Options.** This part is about including the way options are described and compared.
- **Building Choice Engines.** There are ways to augment and react to the preferences of the chooser. Most common on websites, they are highly customizable to the user, they give control to the chooser to conform to the desired plausible path, and they help the chooser comprehend their choice.

The book concludes with some ideas on how we can become better choice architects...which makes me feel more optimistic and in control of choices and decisions I will make.

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